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AUTHOR Gold, Ben K.
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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted by Los Angeles City College (LACC) to measure the academic achievement of 103 day and 34 evening students enrolled during Fall 1980 in Developmental Communication 20, a course in basic reading and writing skills. During the study, five measures of academic achievement were recorded for each student: first- and last-week scores on the Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK), Level 1-A; first- and last-week scores on an LACC developed vocabulary test; and final course grade. In addition, statistical analyses were conducted to determine the correlation between these variables and to assess the statistical value of enrollment status (i.e., day or evening) and the test scores as predictors of the final course grade. Major findings reveal that first- and last-week mean raw scores earned by the students were 44.1 and 51.1 respectively for the TASK exam and 70.8 and 112.2 respectively for the vocabulary test. Though there were no significant differences between the test scores of the day and evening students, the evening students average course grade of 2.76 was higher than the day students average grade of 2.20. Of the variables, post-test vocabulary scores showed the highest correlation with the final grade. The study report presents data tables which compare test score distributions and grades among day and evening students and detail statistical findings. (JP)

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LOS ANGELES CITY COLLEGE

"PERFOPMANCE OF DEVELOPMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS 20 STUDENTS, Fall 1980"

Research Study #81-8

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PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study was undertaken at the request of members of the Developmental Communications Department to provide information on accomplishments of Fall 1980 students enrolled in Developmental Communications 20, a six unit course which "offers a comprehensive program in the basic skills needed for achieving competency in college work."

Students taking the College Placement Test were recommended for placement into D.C. 20 if their Reading Composition score indicated a level below the eighth grade, or if above the eighth grade level, their performance on a writing sample was unacceptable. D.C. 20 is primarily for students whose native language is English.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

Data for the study were furnished by members of the Developmental Communications Department, and consisted of the following items for students enrolled in D.C. 20 in Fall 1980:

1. Name
2. Social Security Number
3. Identification as to Day or Evening class.
4. Score on TASK* (Reading Test) given 1st week of semester.
5. Score on TASK given last week of semester.
6. Score on Vocabulary** test given 1st week of semester.
7. Score on Vocabulary test given last week of semester.
8. Final grade in D.C. 20.

Data were punched on cards and analyzed by means of the SPSS Computer Packages on the District computer.

FINDINGS

Data were furnished for 137 students initially enrolled in D.C. 20 in Fall 1980. Of these 103 (75%) were day students, 34 (25%) evening.

The following tables present the basic findings of the study.

*Stanford Test of Academic Skills (TASK) Level 1-A
**Locally constructed 150 question Vocabulary test.

TABLE 1 - Numbers of Students, Fall 1980 D.C. 20 (%'s in parentheses)

	Day	Evening	Total
No. enrolled	103 (100.0)	34 (100.0)	137 (100.0)
No. taking TASK pre-test	91 (88.3)	33 (97.1)	124 (90.5)
No. taking TASK post-test	44 (42.7)	15 (44.1)	59 (43.1)
No. taking Vocabulary pre-test	78 (75.7)	31 (91.2)	109 (79.6)
No. taking Vocabulary post-test	55 (53.4)	18 (52.9)	73 (53.3)
No. receiving final grade (A, B, C, D, or F)	55 (53.4)	17 (50.0)	72 (52.6)

TABLE 2 - Distribution of Final Grades, Fall 1980, D.C. 20

Grade	Day	Eve	Total
A	9	3	12
B	12	8	20
C	18	5	23
D	13	1	14
F	3	0	3
Inc.	4	1	5
No grade	38	14	52
Total	103	34	137
GPA	2.20	2.76	2.33

TABLE 3 - Performance on TASK, Fall 1980 D.C. 20

Grade Level	Raw-Score	Day Pre	Day Post	Evening Pre	Evening Post	Total Pre	Total Post
12	69+	1	6	1	1	2 (1.6)	7 (11.9)
11	64-68	4	3	3	2	7 (5.6)	5 (8.5)
10	58-63	8	10	2	3	10 (8.1)	13 (22.0)
9	53-57	7	6	2	0	9 (7.3)	6 (10.2)
8	47-52	17	5	4	4	21 (16.9)	9 (15.2)
7	43-46	11	3	2	0	13 (10.5)	3 (5.1)
6	37-42	11	1	8	3	19 (15.3)	4 (6.8)
5	32-36	10	6	4	0	14 (11.3)	6 (10.2)
4	31-	22	4	7	2	29 (23.4)	6 (10.2)
Total		91	44	33	15	124	59
Mean Raw Score		41.5	51.5	42.2	50.6	41.7	51.3
Median Raw Score		43.1	54.5	40.8	51.8	42.5	53.2
Std. Dev. Raw Score		14.5	14.9	15.1	14.9	14.6	14.7

TABLE 4 - Performance on Vocabulary Test, Fall 1980 D.C. 20

Grade Level	Raw-Score	Day Pre	Day Post	Evening Pre	Evening Post	Total Pre	Total Post
N/A	136-150	0	6	0	1	0	7
	121-135	2	14	3	8	5	22
	106-120	5	14	0	6	5	20
	91-105	13	11	5	0	18	11
	76-90	13	6	4	3	17	9
	61-75	14	4	6	0	20	4
	46-60	12	0	4	0	16	0
	31-45	13	0	3	0	16	0
	16-30	5	0	3	0	8	0
	0-15	1	0	3	0	4	0
Total		78	55	31	18	109	73
Mean		68.5	111.7	65.5	115.4	67.6	112.6
Median		64.8	112.2	62.0	120.5	64.7	116.8
Standard Diviation		27.6	20.7	35.4	18.6	29.9	20.1

TABLE 5 - GPA According to TASK Pre-Test Grade Level, Fall 1980, D.C. 20

Grade Level	No.	GPA
9th + above	17	3.18
7th + 8th	17	2.35
6th + below	32	1.78
Total	66	2.29

TABLE 6 - Correlations Between Variables, Fall 1980, D.C. 20
(Pearson Coefficients, N's in parentheses)

	Task Pre-Test		Task Post-Test		Vocab Pre-Test		Vocab Post-Test		Final Grade	
Task Pre-Test	1.00	(124)								
Task Post-Test	0.79	(55)	1.00	(59)						
Vocab. Pre-Test	0.77	(100)	0.70	(53)	1.00	(109)				
Vocab. Post Test	0.59	(67)	0.72	(57)	0.66	(66)	1.00	(73)		
Final Grade	0.53	(66)	0.49	(53)	0.50	(64)	0.76	(67)	1.00	(72)

TABLE 7 - Regression Analysis for Final Grade, Fall 1980, D.C. 20

Stepwise multiple regression showed two variables significant in predicting final grade.

	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	Beta Wts.
Task Post-Test	0.59	0.34	0.59	0.61
Day or Eve.	0.63	0.40	0.17	0.24

TABLE 8 - T-Tests for Pre-Post Tests

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	"T" Value	2 tail Prob.
Task Pre-Test	55	44.1 51.1	13.6 14.8	-5.61	0.00*
Vocab. Pre-Test	66	70.8 112.2	27.3 20.9	-16.3	0.00*

*Significant at 1% level.

TABLE 9 - T-Tests, Day vs. Evening

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	T Value	2 Tail Prob.
Task Pre-Test					
Day	91	41.5	14.5	-0.21	0.84
Evening	33	42.2	15.1		
Task Post-Test					
Day	44	51.5	14.9	+0.21	0.84
Evening	15	50.6	14.9		
Vocab. Pre-Test					
Day	78	68.5	27.6	+0.42	0.68
Evening	31	65.5	35.4		
Vocab. Post-Test					
Day	55	111.7	20.7	-0.72	0.48
Evening	18	115.4	18.6		
Final Grade					
Day	55	2.20	1.14	-2.22	0.03*
Evening	17	2.76	0.83		

*Significant at 5% level

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study reports on test performance and grades earned by students taking Developmental Communications 20 in the Fall 1980 semester. Tests given were a Reading Comprehension (TASK) and a Vocabulary test, both given during the first week of the semester and again at the end of the semester. Data were furnished by faculty of the Developmental Communications Department.

Following are some observations on the findings of the study:

(1) 137 students (103 day, 34 evening) enrolled in D.C. 20 during Fall 1980. 72 of these (53%) completed the semester and obtained a final grade of A, B, C, D, or F.

(2) 55 students took the Reading test at both administrations. Pre-test mean raw score was 44.1 (approximate grade level 7.3), post-test mean raw score was 51.1 (approximate grade level 8.8).

(3) 66 students took the Vocabulary test at both administrations. Pre-test mean raw score was 70.8; post-test mean raw score was 112.2. Maximum raw score was 150, grade levels not available.

(4) Evening students showed no significant differences from day students on any of the four tests but showed a significant higher average final grade (2.76 compared to 2.20).

(5) A sorting into three levels on the basis of the Reading pre-test showed that those students reading at the 9th grade level or above earned grades averaging above B, while those reading below the 7th grade level earned grades averaging below C.

(6) Vocabulary and Reading tests showed correlations above 0.7, indicating that in large part the two tests are measuring the same thing.

(7) Post-test Vocabulary score showed the highest correlations with final grade, suggesting that performance on the Post-test vocabulary test is a major factor in determining final grade.

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